



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

September 9, 2009

BOARD PRESENT: Dr. Gail Bailey, Art Brodsky, David Chiles, Paulette Dickerson, Althea Grey-McKenzie, Dr. Kay Kim, Otto Lewis, Dr. Lois Neuman

STAFF PRESENT: B. Parker Hamilton, Director; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Kathlin Smith, Silver Spring LAC

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Brodsky at 7:20 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Art Brodsky shared an eco-bag from the Manchester Library in England; the bag is totally recyclable. Perhaps this is an idea for the Friends of the Library or MCPL.

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes from the May 13, 2009 meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Transition of Chair and Vice-Chair

Art Brodsky is the new Chair replacing Dr. Lois Neuman and Althea Grey-McKenzie replaces Brian Krantz as Vice-chair.

Pedestrian Bridge to Connect the New Silver Spring Library and Wayne Parking Garage

Parker Hamilton provided background regarding the bridge. The Silver Spring LAC and FOL have reportedly made efforts to talk with Councilmembers, but have been disappointed in the responses. They did receive positive feedback from County Executive Leggett. They noted that they had heard nothing from the Library Board and were not sure where the Board stands on this issue. Ms. Hamilton invited them to come and speak with the Board. Kathlin Smith will be attending tonight's meeting representing the Silver Spring LAC.

Ms. Smith stated that one concern that has been voiced concerning the pedestrian bridge is that it will take people off the streets and out of the retail stores. Many proponents of the bridge feel

that without a bridge, you will likely turn away many of the current users of the library that actually bring business into Silver Spring. Ms. Smith suggested that there is a gut reaction against pedestrian bridges. There is a sense that people associate them with Rosslyn and other urban architecture. There has not been agreed upon alternatives suggested for parking.

The Council voted 7-1 against amending the Silver Spring Urban Renewal Plan to allow the building of a pedestrian bridge over Wayne Avenue. The Silver Spring FOL and LAC are going to enlist the support of other Silver Spring community organizations to see if they can persuade Council to rescind the vote. The LAC will also draft a letter to be published in the Gazette.

Ms. Smith can be reached by email. She thanked the Board for the invitation to attend the meeting and expressed her appreciation for their support.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS:

The Board is waiting to hear from the County Executive's Office on which applicants have been approved based on the Interview Committee's recommendations. Parker Hamilton suggested that the Board should make a connection with the LAC chairs and let them know about the transition, and if there are any hot issues requiring a liaison from the Board, perhaps it could be arranged.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Staff Development Day is October 12, 2009. There is a new model this year; the meeting will not be held in one location. A venue could not be found to accommodate all staff, so Staff Development Day will be held in the branches (Davis, Germantown, Praisner, Wheaton and Collection Development). Permission had already been obtained to close all branches, Collection Management and Library administrative offices for the day. The main focus this year will be mandatory training. Training will be provided for: the circulation system upgrade to Symphony; MC311, the one-call center for the County; and electronic timesheets. There will also be a demonstration on how MCPL will be doing new business with technology.

The new technology will be used during Staff Development Day. From the training lab at Davis, Parker Hamilton will speak to all staff via videoconferencing. Art Brodsky, Dr. Lois Neuman and Althea Grey-McKenzie will be invited to speak. Mr. Leggett will try to visit all of the sites and Gino Renne, MCGEO President, may be with him. Mr. Leggett would like to talk about the County's fiscal situation, and the fact that Departments will be asked for another savings plan.

The other calendar event is the Library Summit on November 17. Dr. Lois Neuman is on the Planning Committee along with Bob Chartrand from the FOL and MCPL staff. The plans for the Summit were presented to Mr. Leggett and he made some changes. He would like to invite up to 300 "movers and shakers" within the County who are interested in Library services. He would also like to have a local author, such as Thomas Friedman, whose life has been influenced by libraries, to be the lunch speaker. Board members were asked to submit names. Invitees will include Friends of the Library, Library Board, all LAC members, library staff, public school media specialist, Montgomery College librarians, and politicians. The desired outcome is three-pronged: a new strategic plan; a technology plan; and a facilities plan. This will be the beginning, at the next meeting there will be smaller work groups.

All of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) projects are on target. There have been some very cool designs submitted for the Silver Spring Library. There will be a public meeting within the next month or so to bring that plan to the community.

MCPL has been contacted by Lakeforest Mall and the City of Gaithersburg. They are interested in having the interim facility for the Gaithersburg Library at Lakeforest Mall. It is a site that MCPL has been interested in, but the former owners of the mall were not interested. It is an economic development situation; the mall is dying and they know that libraries attract people and so it will work for them and for Libraries as well.

Libraries received \$37,000 from the FOL for marketing and special programs. Noyes received a \$75,000 bequest donation. It is the largest single donation the FOL has received for any one library. This donation could help to create MCPL's own early literacy program for children fashioned after Baltimore County's Storyville.

MCPL and other County departments will be partnering with the Census Bureau in order to ensure that everyone is counted during the 2010 census. Representatives would like to come and talk with community groups; Parker Hamilton suggested that the Library Board might be a good group with which to visit.

A memo from the County Executive or Chief Administrative Officer is expected soon indicating the percentage MCPL will have to save from the current budget. As last year, Administration's current thinking is not to harm any specific community but look at the system as a whole. Whether Mr. Leggett is going to hold firm to not wanting to close libraries or reduce hours is not known. Director Hamilton will have conversation with the County Executive to determine what his priorities are and then proceed from there.

The Summer Reading program has reached completion. The numbers were down this year in terms of people completing the program. Not many prizes were given out this year; one was given at the end of the program. Some residents did not like that. The program's logistics will be evaluated to determine the direction for next year.

MCPL has applied for stimulus money with the County to create computer labs in some of the branches. An application was also submitted with the other Maryland public libraries (MPL) for stimulus money, so it is possible MCPL can be a part of both programs. MPL would like to create mobile labs. If MCPL is the recipient of one or both, there will have to be matching funds. The FOL may be willing to help with the matching funds.

There is no existing prototype. The plan is to have computers that can be moved from branch to branch in order to conduct programs such as resume building. The lack of computers in the branches should not be a barrier to doing these types of programs.

An opinion was received from the County Attorney regarding staff selling FOL materials at the circulation desk. The opinion stated that staff should only be doing the work for which they were hired. Therefore, Agency Managers have been informed that staff are no longer allowed to sell materials for the FOL. The FOL, Montgomery County, Inc. has informed the local chapters and there has been some pushback. MCPL has to accept the opinion given by the County Attorney; it comes from the County Charter.

This summer, the FOL sold the Summer Reading T-shirts very successfully online. So there is a model that shows it can work. It is MCPL's understanding that the FOL have offered to create websites for the local chapters that will have PayPal. They have offered the bookstores as pick up locations. They are trying to work with the chapters to move in a direction that does not violate the County Charter.

FOL is holding a fundraiser that will most likely be at the VisArts Center on Gibbs Street. It is called *Read, Eat & Give*. It is a micro-brewery tasting event targeted at those in their twenties and thirties. Wine-tasting or micro-brewery tasting events like this have been held in libraries across the country. The event was originally to be held in the Rockville Library, but there was an objection raised. MCPL and FOL were asked to consider moving the event to another location to alleviate any discomfort. VisArts was agreeable to having the event at their center. There are a few areas that need to be considered before a final decision is made regarding the location of the event. The event is October 2. Tickets are being sold online.

In the plans for the new Silver Spring Library is a green roof of some sort. The idea is to have a café on the green roof for people to rent. It could be rented for anything from meetings to wedding receptions. It would be the renter's responsibility to have a security person and obtain all licenses. Cleanup, damages, etc. would be built in. One-day licenses to serve alcoholic beverages can be obtained by those holding events in all County buildings, maybe with the exception of schools.

The Twinbrook 50th Anniversary celebration is Saturday.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Friends of the Library Letter

Art Brodsky discussed the letter the Board received from the FOL. This issue was discussed briefly during the May meeting. A restricted endowment was given to the FOL a number of years ago by the Library Board. FOL would like to have the Board unrestrict this endowment in order to use the funds for Library enhancements. Mr. Brodsky suggested using the endowment for a new initiative called Library Economic Assistance Program (LEAP). The funds would be turned over jointly by the Board and FOL to MCPL to be used for economic stimulus-related activities. His thought would be to boost up WIFI capabilities, laptop usage – people are coming to the library to try to find jobs, look for jobs, apply for jobs, so there would be a hardware component and a programmatic component. If done right and done quickly, this could have an impact for libraries.

After discussion, which included potentially using this money to pilot a mobile, a motion was made to establish a program called LEAP that the Board could partner with the FOL to transfer the money directly to the Library. The motion was seconded. The vote was unanimous. Art Brodsky will contact Ann Dorough to follow up with FOL.

LAC Handbook

Dr. Lois Neuman said the handbook has gone to the County Boards, Commissions and Committees office for review. Dr. Neuman and Parker Hamilton met with Connie Latham, the Special Assistant to the County Executive in charge of Boards, Commissions and Committees. Ms. Latham thought everything should be fine but she needed to check with the Office of the County Attorney. The County Attorney found a few minor areas that needed to be revisited. A meeting will be scheduled with Connie Latham to review these areas.

LAC UPDATES:

LAC Applications

A motion was made to approve all applications for LAC membership. The motion was seconded and the vote was unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton